

# Marais des Cygnes Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

## Marais des Cygnes Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday January 4, 2023, 1:30pm

Neosho County Community College - Ottawa and GoToMeeting

### Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Lyle Wobker (Chair)	Paola, KS	Agriculture 2	2023	Yes
Keri Harris (Vice-Chair)	Ottawa, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2025	Yes
Don Stottlemire	Rantoul, KS	At Large Public 2	2023	Yes
Jared Morrison	Topeka, KS	Water Assurance District	2023	No
Lori Kuykendall	Lyndon, KS	WRAPS	2023	Yes
Mike Mabrey	Edgerton, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2023	No
Gary Armentrout	Centerville, KS	Public Water Supply 3	2025	No
Gayla Speer	Wellsville, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2025	Yes
Ron Brown	Fort Scott, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2025	Yes
Scott Yeargain	Ottawa, KS	Conservation/Environment 2	2025	Yes
James DePriest	Iola, KS	Public Water Supply 2	2023	Yes
Ray Samuel	Richmond, KS	At Large Public 3	2025	Yes
Laura Hines	Lawrence, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2023	Yes

### Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Taylor Hermann	KCC
Doug Cole	KDHE
James Cubit	Pottawatomie Creek Watershed
Don George	KDWP
Kaitlin Knauss	WRAPS
Katie Acree	KDHE
Riley Vande Ven	KDHE
Chad Omitt	NWS- NOAA
Richard Rockel	KWO
Lauren Campbell	KWO
Angela Anderson	KWO
Weston McCary	KWO
Terry Medley	KDA
Chris Steffen	KDWP

- I. **Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 1:31pm by Chairperson, Lyle Wobker (Chair).
- II. **Agenda:** Gayla Speer (Agriculture) moved to accept the agenda. James DePriest (Public Water Supply) seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Review of October 2022 Meeting Notes:** The meeting notes from the October meeting were reviewed. There were no corrections.

**Membership:** Lyle Wobker, Chair, Paola, KS; Keri Harris, Vice-Chair, Ottawa, KS ; Gary Armentrout, Centerville, KS; Ron Brown, Fort Scott, KS; Lori Kuykendall, Lyndon, KS; Jared Morrison, Topeka, KS; Mike Mabrey, Edgerton, KS; Gayla Speer, Wellsville, KS; Don Stottlemire, Rantoul, KS; Scott Yeargain, Ottawa, KS; James DePriest, Iola, KS; Ray Samuel, Richmond, K; Laura Hines, Lawrence, KS.  
**KWO Planner:** Lauren Campbell, 785-296-3185; Lauren.Campbell@kwo.ks.gov

## IV. Climate History and Projections (Chad Omitt – NOAA NWS):

Chad Omitt (NOAA NWS) presented on climate change and the effects in Kansas within the next 50-100 years. In the global environment, a 2.5-3° C warming is the most likely scenario. While this is not the most serious scenario, people will still need to adapt and mitigate. The earth is getting warmer especially in the higher latitudes, but “winter we still occur, but the odds favor more warm temperature records being broken then cold records.” Kansas impacts from climate change will most likely include: warmer temperatures, increased evaporation, more precipitation with greater intensity, longer growing season, increased intensity of future droughts, increased frequency and intensity of wildfires increase especially with precipitation patterns, more winter/spring rains but less summer/fall rains. Chad Omitt also gave a quick update of the current drought status in Kansas. The drought has not changed much from the fall, but the northeast part of the state has received some rain recently.

## V. Basin Reservoir Operations Update (Richard Rockel – KWO):

Richard Rockel (KWO) gave an overview on the Marais des Cygnes Assurance District operations agreement. Operational triggers indicate depletion of natural flows and these trigger the Division of Water Resource’s administration of water rights, not allowing some water rights to pump. Richard clarified the definition of minimal desirable stream flows (MDS) and how it relates to administration. Reservoir releases this year made up a significant amount of streamflow as natural flows dwindled. Reservoirs are operating to fulfill operation agreements as best as possible. As of now, the USACE and the KWO are not planning on operating a winter drawdown as the Lake Level Management Plan calls for on Hillsdale to allow the reservoir to fill back up in case of prolonged drought. Richard pointed out the Lake Level Management Plans for the reservoirs in the region, specifically Hillsdale and explained the future use is now paid for but has not yet been called into service.

## VI. Hillsdale Bathymetry Results (Richard Rockel – KWO):

In line with projections and confirmed that projections are accurate. Average 120 AF lost per year. No drastic losses since last survey.

## VII. WISE Program Introduction (Weston McCary- KWO):

Weston McCary (KWO) gave an overview of the new KWO Water Innovation Systems and Education (WISE) Program, which has replaced the Water Technology Farm program. WISE is a water education and innovation imitative which focuses on the implementation of field practices, technology, and management practices. The goal result is measurable and scalable groundwater conservation, improved water quality, and soil and ecological health. Weston explained different components of the WISE program including the cost-share program, field days, technology demonstrations around the state.

## VIII. Updates

- a. **2022 Governor’s Conference:** Lyle Wobker (Agriculture-chair) said he enjoyed the conference and recommended it to anyone who is interested in going in the future. The governor attended this year and highlighted her priority of water issues for her second term. Lyle mentioned Lucas Bessire’s book *Running Out: In Search of Water on the High Plains* and the City Manager of Hay’s perspective of the R9 ranch project. The RAC Chair meeting discussed how education will be a priority and responsibility of the RAC ongoing in the future.

- b. **December 2022 KWA Meeting:** Lauren Campbell (KWO) gave an overview of the December KWA meeting that took place in Colby and highlighted the Ogallala Aquifer subcommittee policy recommendations as well as the two RAC messages on the GMD3 6,000-gallon water transfer proof of concept. The RAC mentioned that they would also like to stay informed on any future GMD water transfers happening in the state.
- IX. **RAC purpose and role:** Stemmed from discussion at the RAC Chair meeting that took place during the Governor's Water Conference, Lauren Campbell (KWO) read and explained the internal policy memorandum on the purpose and responsibilities of the RAC.
- X. **Questions and Future Issues from RAC Members:** Ron Brown (Conservation/Environment) brought up the issue of the new EPA requirements for the Waters of the United States. Scott Yeargain (Conservation/Environment) mentioned his agreement and appreciation for the Ogallala Aquifer policy recommendations and the RAC messages on eastern to western Kansas water transfers. He also mentioned that this is not an eastern vs. western Kansas issue, but if western Kansas runs out of water, the whole state loses. Ron Brown also mentioned his interest and hope in soil health practices becoming more popular in the future.
- XI. **RAC Messages to KWA:** Scott Yeargain suggested looking at TMDLs in the region since there are over 60 impaired water bodies in the region. Discussion took place about where these nutrients are coming from and the difference between point source and non-point source pollution. Kaitlin Knauss (WRAPS) mentioned the KU study on non-point solution in the Hillsdale watershed. Lyle suggested bringing in a speaker on impaired waters in the region.
- XII. **Agency Input:** Don George (KDWP) said his group is looking forward to the new year and providing new opportunities for fishers and anglers. There are a couple of projects going on in the region including renovation at Elm Creek Lake and shoreline enhancements Uniontown school pond. Doug Cole (KDHE) thanked the group for the work of the RAC, and mentioned that KDHE Bureau of Water is looking for ways to lessen nutrient and sediment inflows at Hillsdale. Chris Steffen gave an update on the change of term for aquatic nuisance species and is now aquatic invasive species (AIS) and introduced the new campaign for watercraft cleaning.
- XIII. **Public Input:** There was no public input.
- XIV. **Adjournment:** Lyle declared the meeting adjourned at 3:45pm.

### Future Meetings:

- a. **Legislative Visits – January 24, 2023 – Topeka, KS**
- b. **Kansas Water Authority – January 25, 2023 – Topeka, KS**
- c. **Spring RAC Meeting – Date and location TBD**